

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL MEETING OF THE  
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
Tacoma, Washington  
October 26, 2005**

The local jurisdiction meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., on October 26, 2005, at the Tacoma Sheraton Hotel, 1320 Broadway Plaza, Tacoma Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Dan O'Neal, Dick Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, and Dale Stedman.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair O'Neal opened the meeting with Commissioner and guest introductions.

**OPENING REMARKS**

Mayor Bill Baarsma, City of Tacoma, welcomed the Commission to the City of Tacoma. He noted that the Tacoma and Pierce county has experienced tremendous growth over the past several years. Much of this growth is within the city center itself. He noted that the city supports Sound Transit and link light rail, sharing that they provide transportation to students and visitors to the downtown core. This positive growth is creating a greater demand on the transportation infrastructure. He explained that 65 percent of the cities pavement is in poor quality. In recent years the city's allocation to transportation revenue has decreased by 12 percent. The Nickel gas tax increase provides the first new revenue since 1990 for the city's residential and arterial streets. A new revenue stream is needed to provide dollars for pavement preservation. Transportation improvements are critical to avoid gridlock.

Chair O'Neal acknowledged the presence of Senator Kastama, Chelsea Orvell of Congressman Adam Smith's office and Sheila Babb of Senator Patty Murray's office.

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITY FOR FUNDING**

John Ladenburg, Executive director, Pierce County, explained that the primary function of transportation is getting people back and forth to work in order to keep the economy functioning. As we talk about transportation we need to be strategic about why we are doing what we are doing. The public needs to understand why. Land use planning and economic development need to be considered together in transportation planning.

Shawn Bunney, Chair, Pierce County Council, complimented the Department's Olympic Region and Urban Corridor staff for their support of the corridor driven package. He explained that Pierce County residents feel that have heartburn over the import of gas taxes to other communities. He provided an overview of the SR 16 HOV lane project, as well as touching on other improvements along the corridor. He emphasized that voters should be educated in order to make the right decisions with regards to investments.

R. Ted Bottiger, President, Port of Tacoma Commission, shared that the Port is pleased that the Washington Transportation Plan holds a robust section on freight needs. He noted that a strategic investment in the infrastructure is essential. Without this investment trade movement would be choked. He explained that he is certain that all Washington Ports join in the call for a solution to the movement of trade within the Puget Sound region.

Chair O'Neal recognized the presence of Senator Rosa Franklin and Representative Flannigan, and Dan Mathis, FHWA.

### **REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM PROJECTS**

Randy Hain, Regional Administrator, Olympic Region, WSDOT, provided a detailed overview of the Pierce County HOV system. He shared that the ultimate goal in Pierce County is to provide HOV lanes from SR 512 Interchange north to connect into the HOV lanes that are being built south. The second primary goal is to provide HOV lanes on SR 16 on the Purdy Interchange to intersect with I-5. He explained that there are funding and contract issues on these projects. He provided highlights of other projects within the region.

### **TOLLING OPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVE**

Commissioner Ford provided an overview of the status of the Tolling Study. He explained that the study would be used as a tool to determine the feasibility of future tolling.

David Pope, Toll Systems Manager, Tacoma Narrows Bridge, provided an overview of the schedule for implementation of TNB tolling. He explained that the Department would work with the newly created Citizens Advisory Committee on Tolling, in a series of workshops, on toll rate considerations. He noted that there are public education workshops currently underway.

Chair O'Neal recognized the presence of Representative Derek Kilmer.

### **PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD**

Don Williams, citizen shared his concerns regarding the design capacity of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Representative Kilmer shared that tolling on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge is of primary concern to residents in the area. Clear policy direction and an equitable approach to tolling are necessary. He also mentioned specific highway safety issues that are resulting from capacity challenges.

Representative Patricia Lantz shared her concerns regarding equity in tolling and the direction that policy should take.

Randy Boss, citizen shared his concerns regarding equity in tolling for traffic users of the state.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m., on October 26, 2005.

**WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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DAN O'NEAL, Chair

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DICK FORD, Vice-Chair

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EDWARD BARNES, Member

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ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

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ELMIRA FORNER, Member

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Vacant  
Member

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DALE STEDMAN, Member

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DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member  
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Administrator

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DATE OF APPROVAL